

**METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR PERFORMING IDLE HANDOFF IN A  
MULTIPLE ACCESS COMMUNICATION SYSTEM**

**ABSTRACT**

A method and apparatus which permits handoffs while the mobile station is in the system access state. This is achieved by providing for channel assignment messages to be sent over the paging channel of a plurality of base stations, which increases the probability of one of the messages getting through. In addition, this assures the mobile station will be able handoff to a different base station and have a traffic channel allocated to it on the new base station without delay. In addition, a method and apparatus which permits the mobile station to be directly assigned into a soft handoff state upon traffic channel assignment.